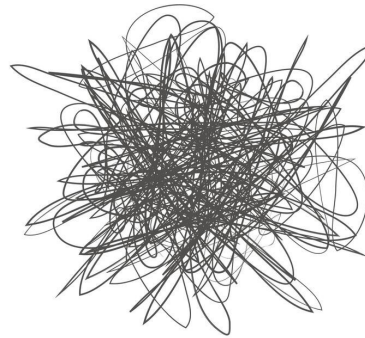


BOARD OF ECONOMIC ADVISORS

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

UNCERTAINTY

CHAOS

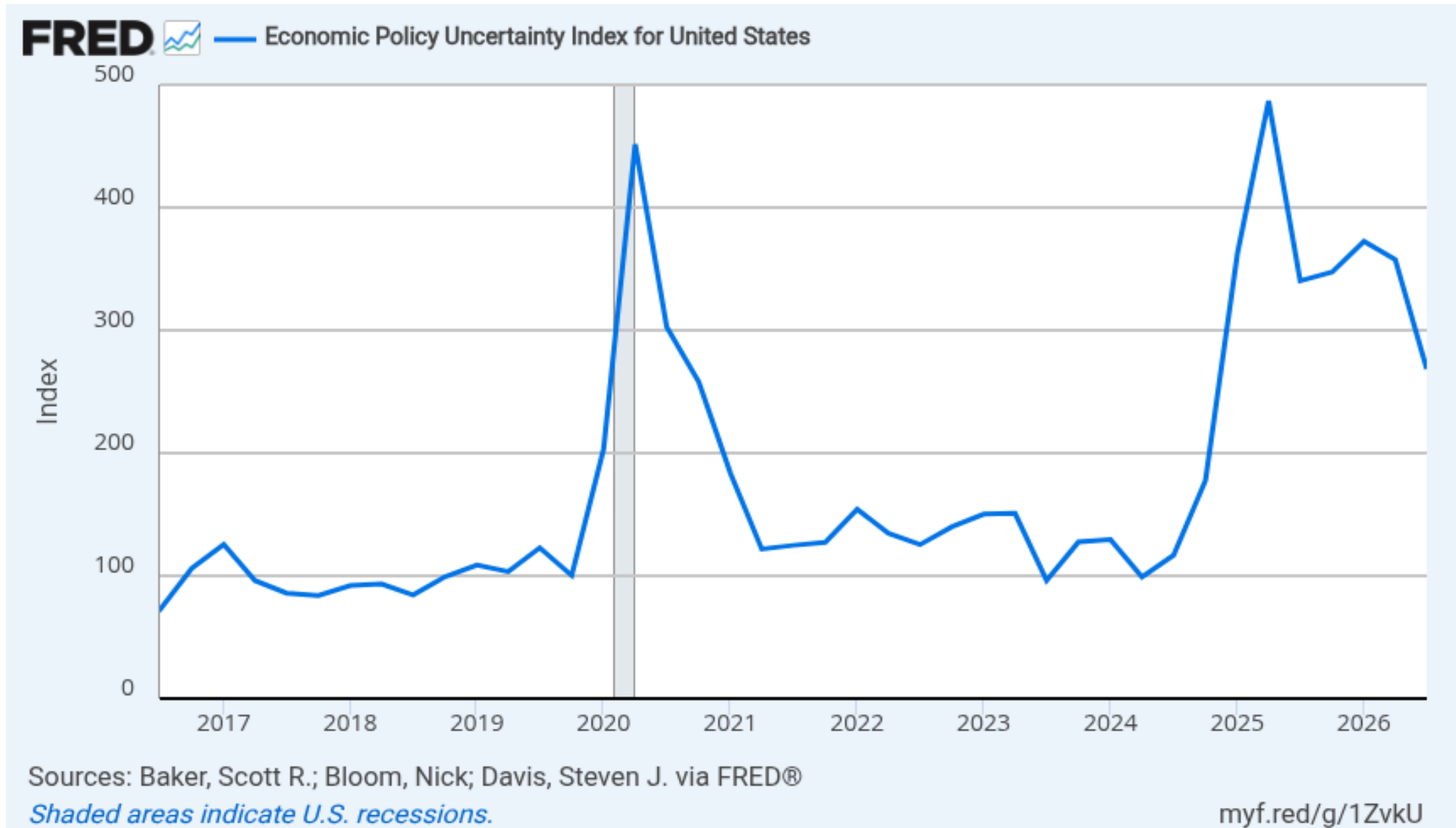


October 21, 2026
Frank Hefner, Ph.D.

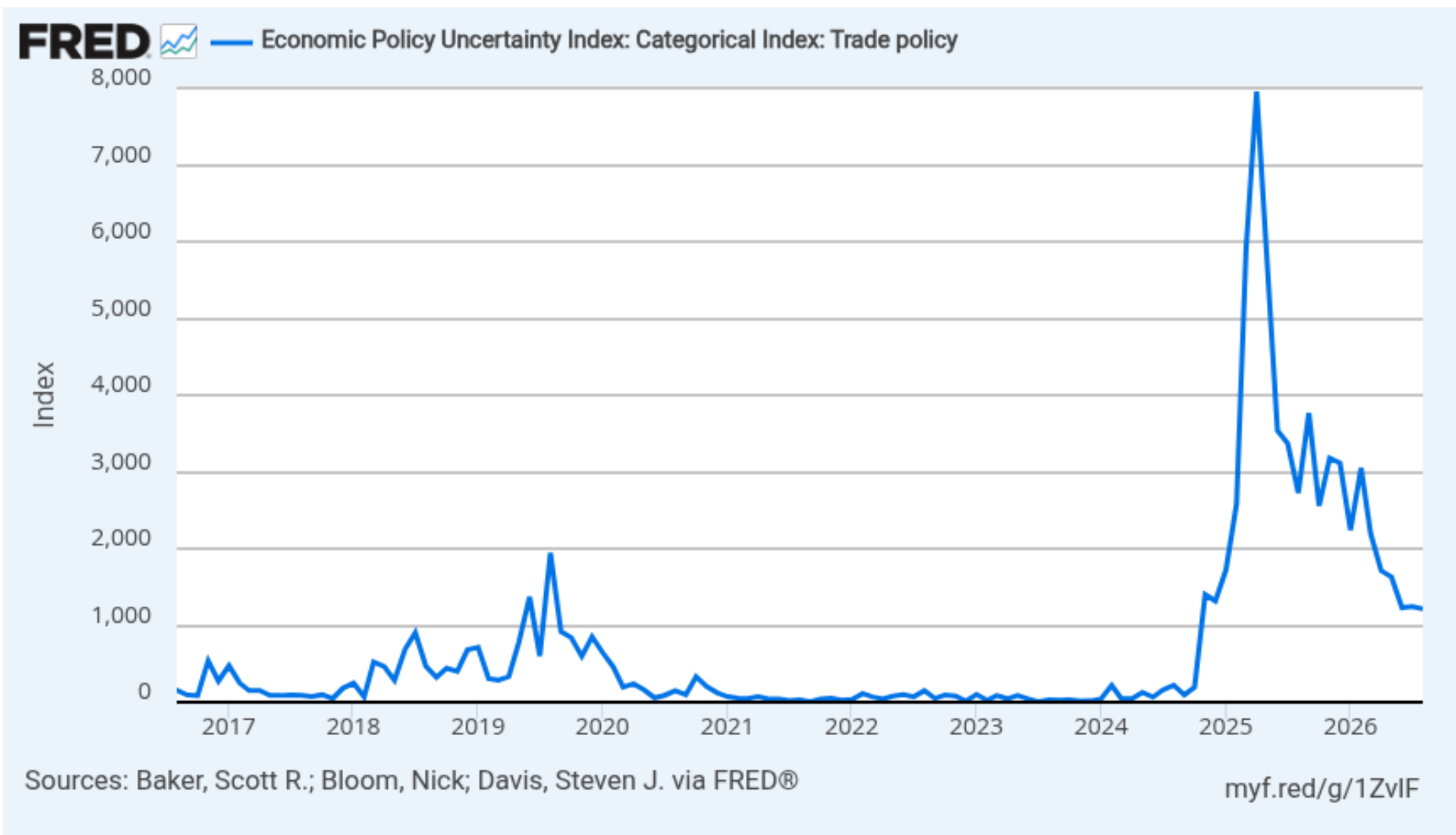


COLLEGE OF
CHARLESTON
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

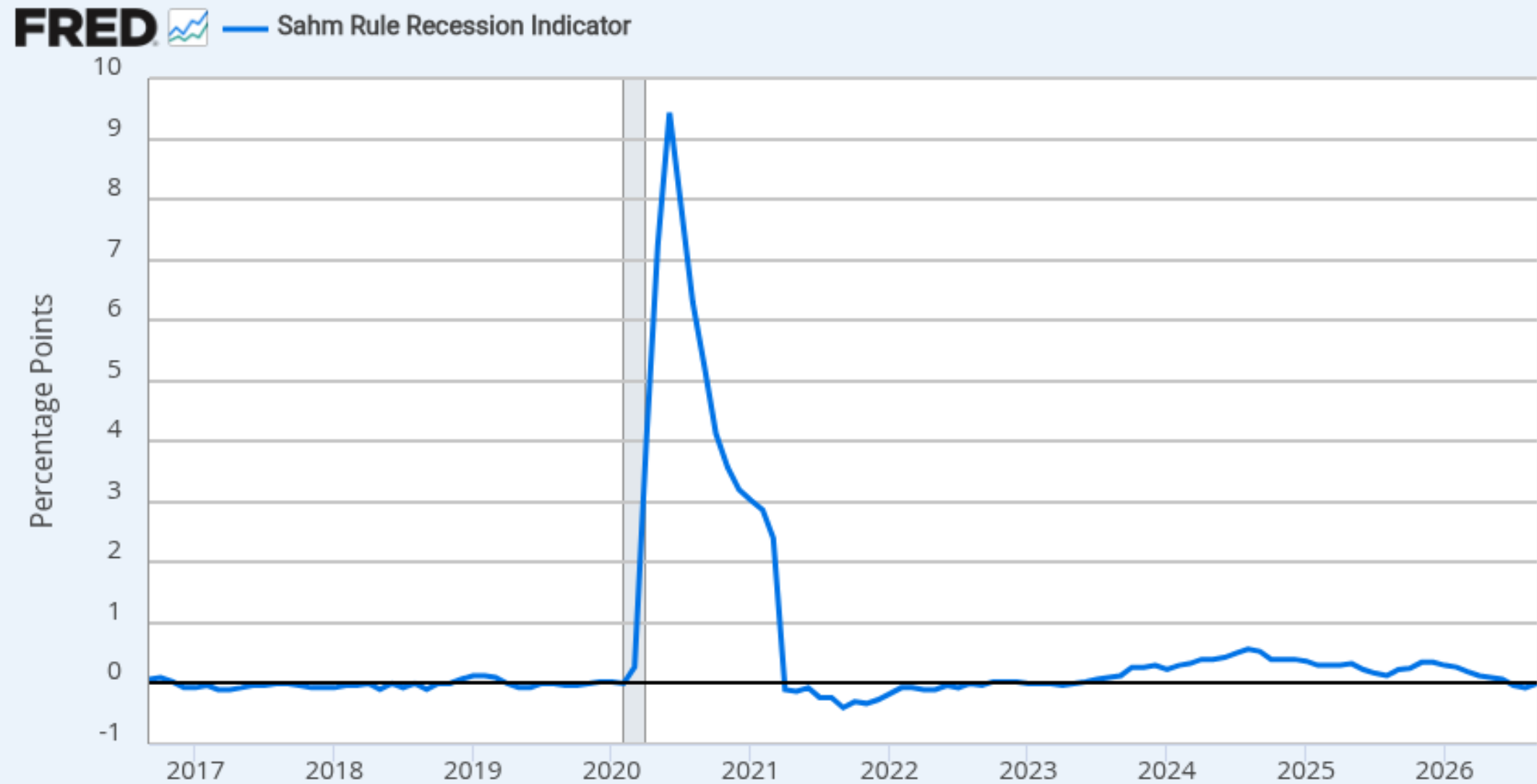
Economic Policy Uncertainty Index for the United States



Categorical Index: Trade Policy



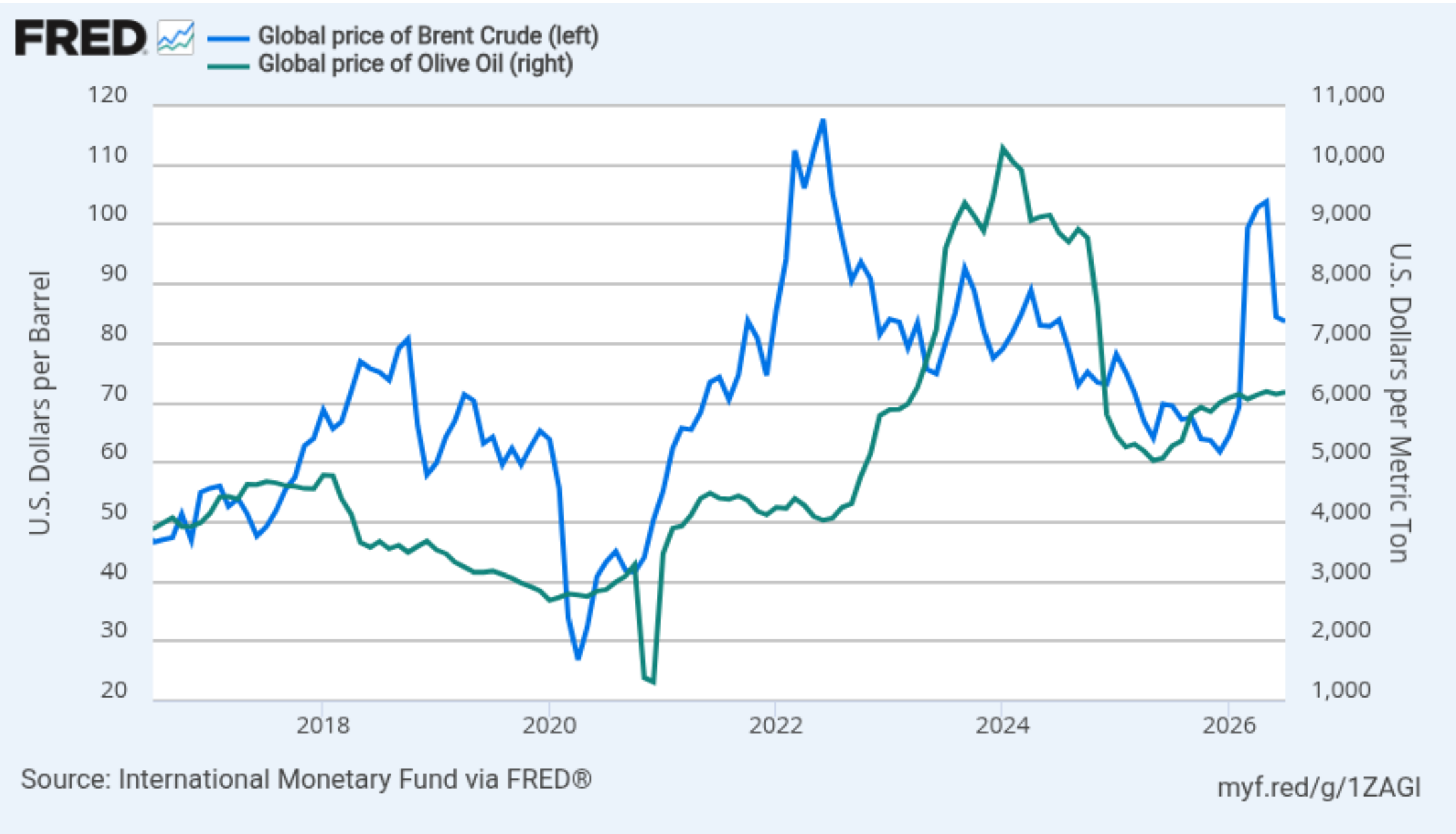
Sahm Rule Recession Indicator



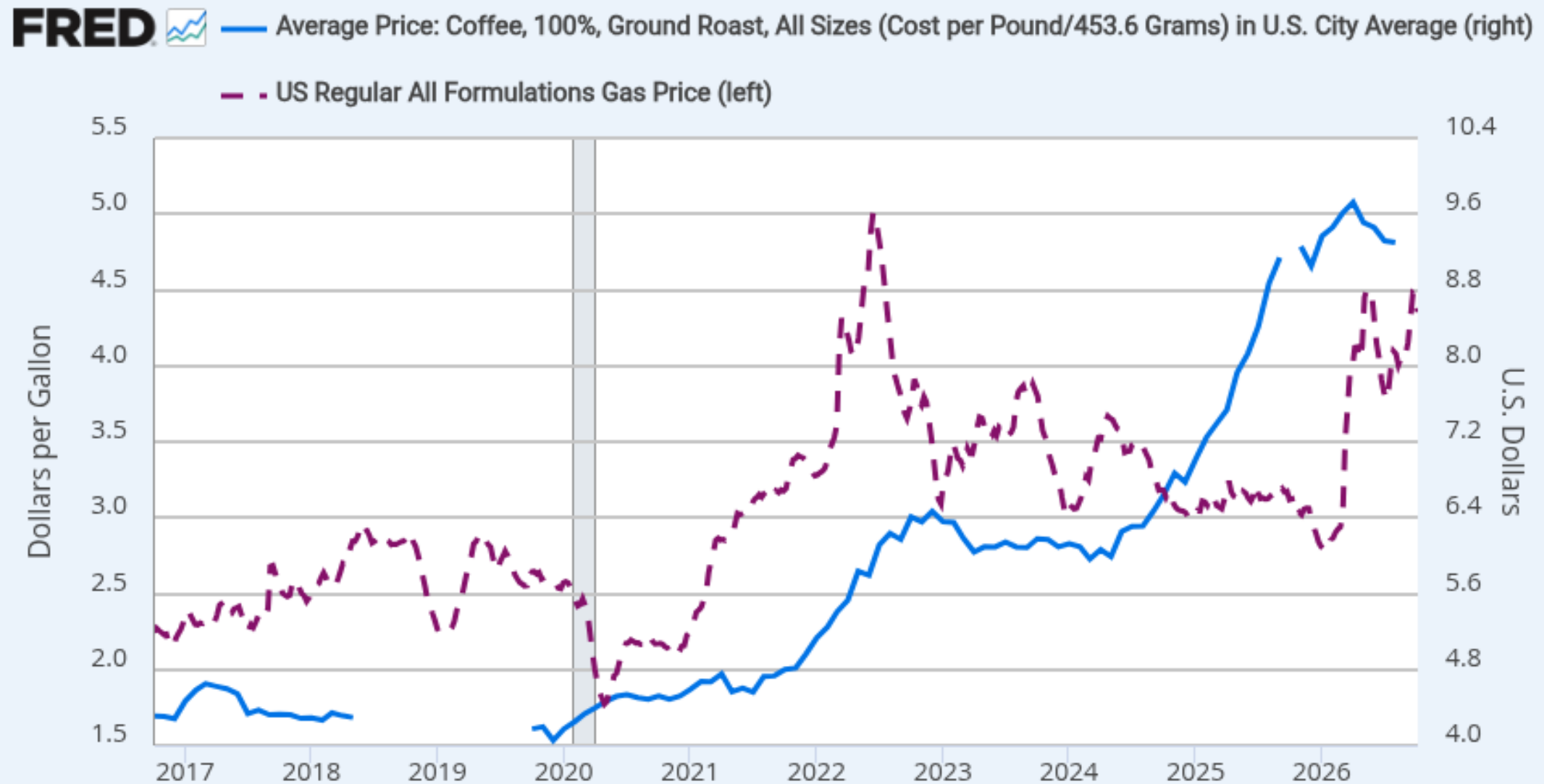
Source: Sahm, Claudia via FRED®
Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions.

myf.red/g/1ZvIY

Global Price of Brent Crude and Olive Oil



Coffee and Gas Prices



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; U.S. Energy Information Administration via FRED®

Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions.

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Forecasters Predict Falling Short- and Long-Term Interest Rates Through 2027

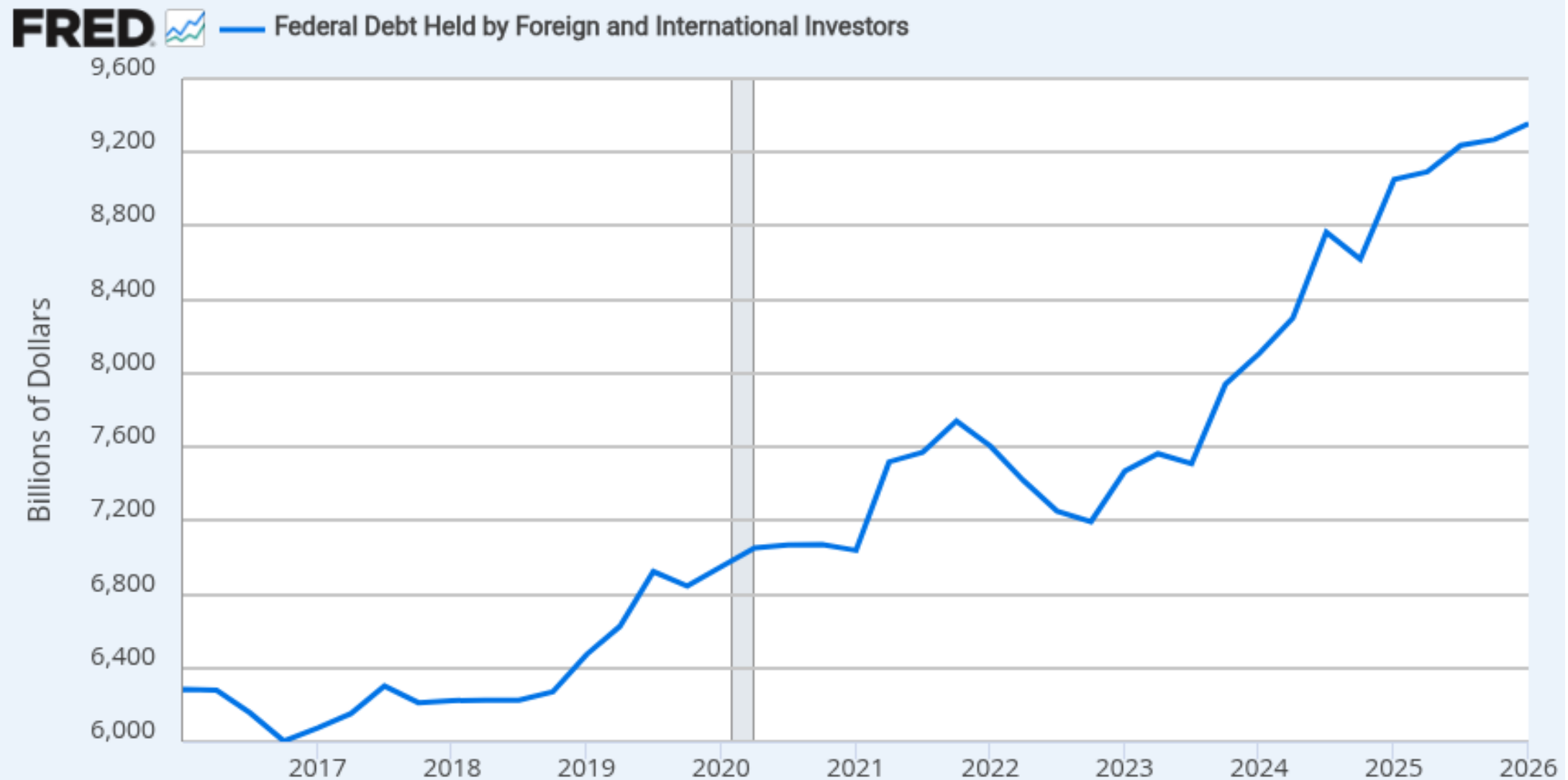
(Livingston Survey – Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia June 26, 2026)

CofC prediction:

Long-term interest rates will not fall.

Inflation will continue at 3.5% to 4.5%.

Foreign Demand Could Offset Increase in Bonds Issuance



Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury. Fiscal Service via FRED®

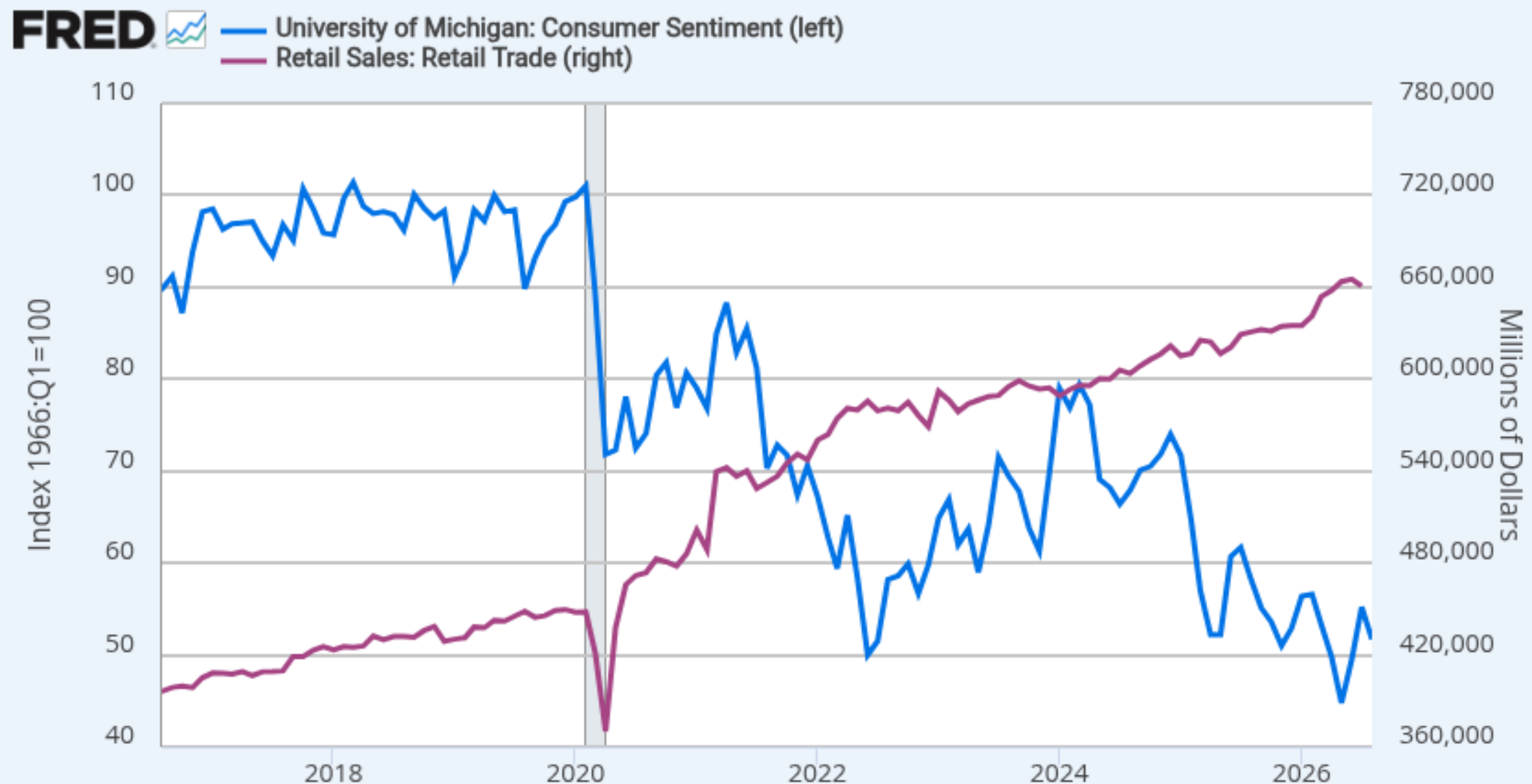
Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions.

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The Consumer...so far...



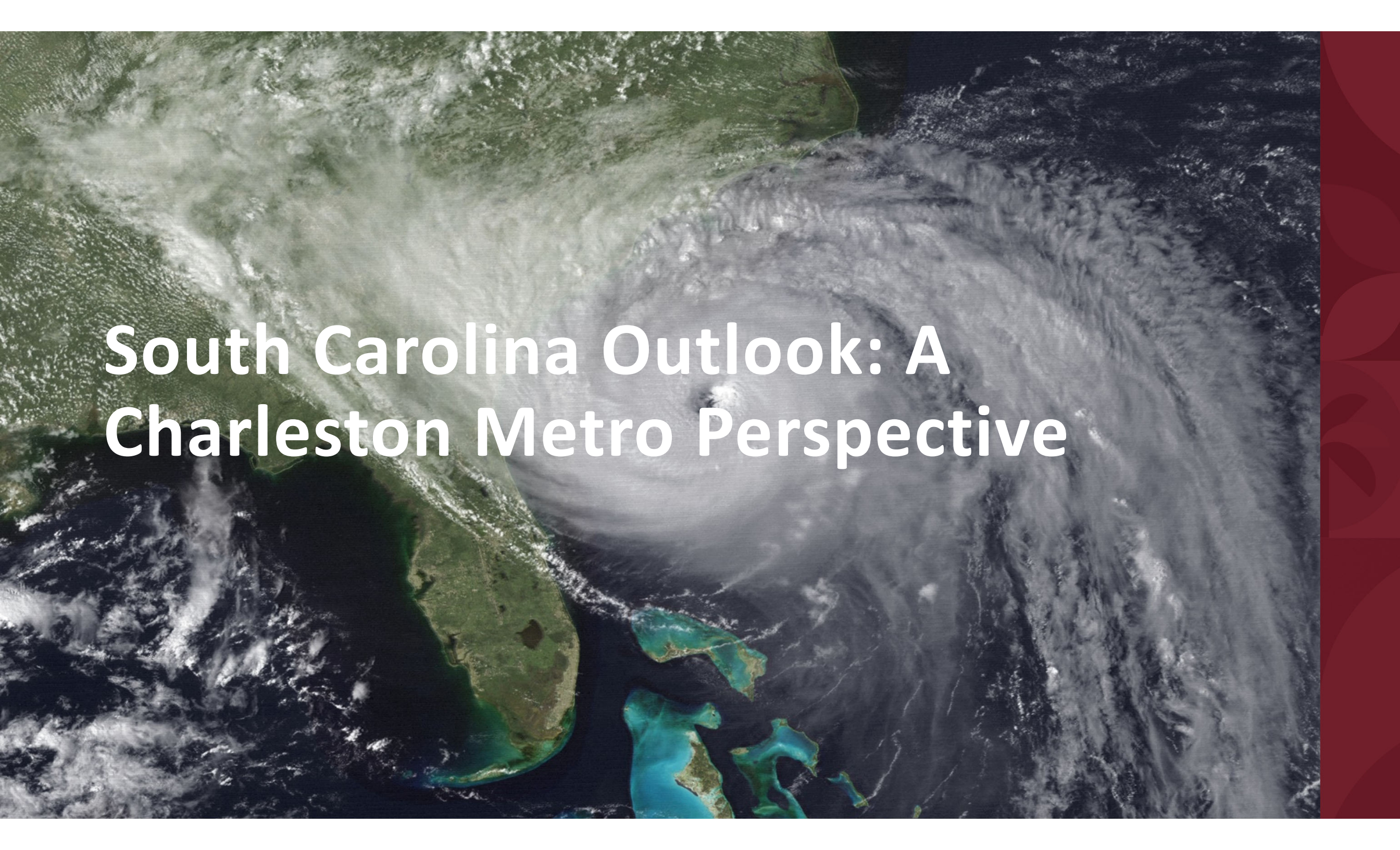
Forecasting with Feelings: The Modest Link Between Consumer Sentiment and Spending



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; University of Michigan via FRED®

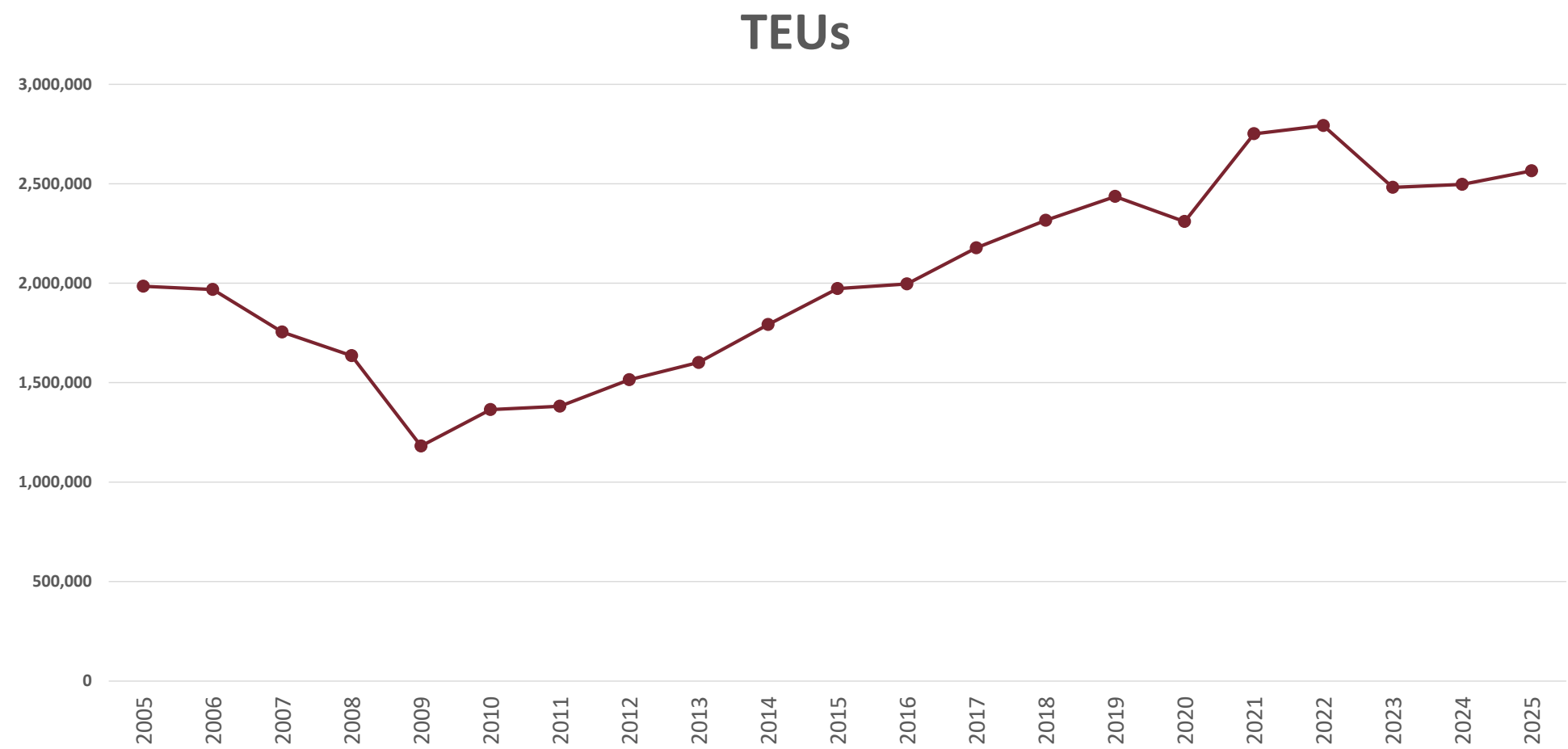
Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions.

myf.red/g/1ZAEI

A satellite image of a hurricane over the Atlantic Ocean. The hurricane's eye is visible in the center, surrounded by dense, swirling cloud bands. The coastline of South Carolina is visible on the left side of the image, with the ocean to the right. The text "South Carolina Outlook: A Charleston Metro Perspective" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

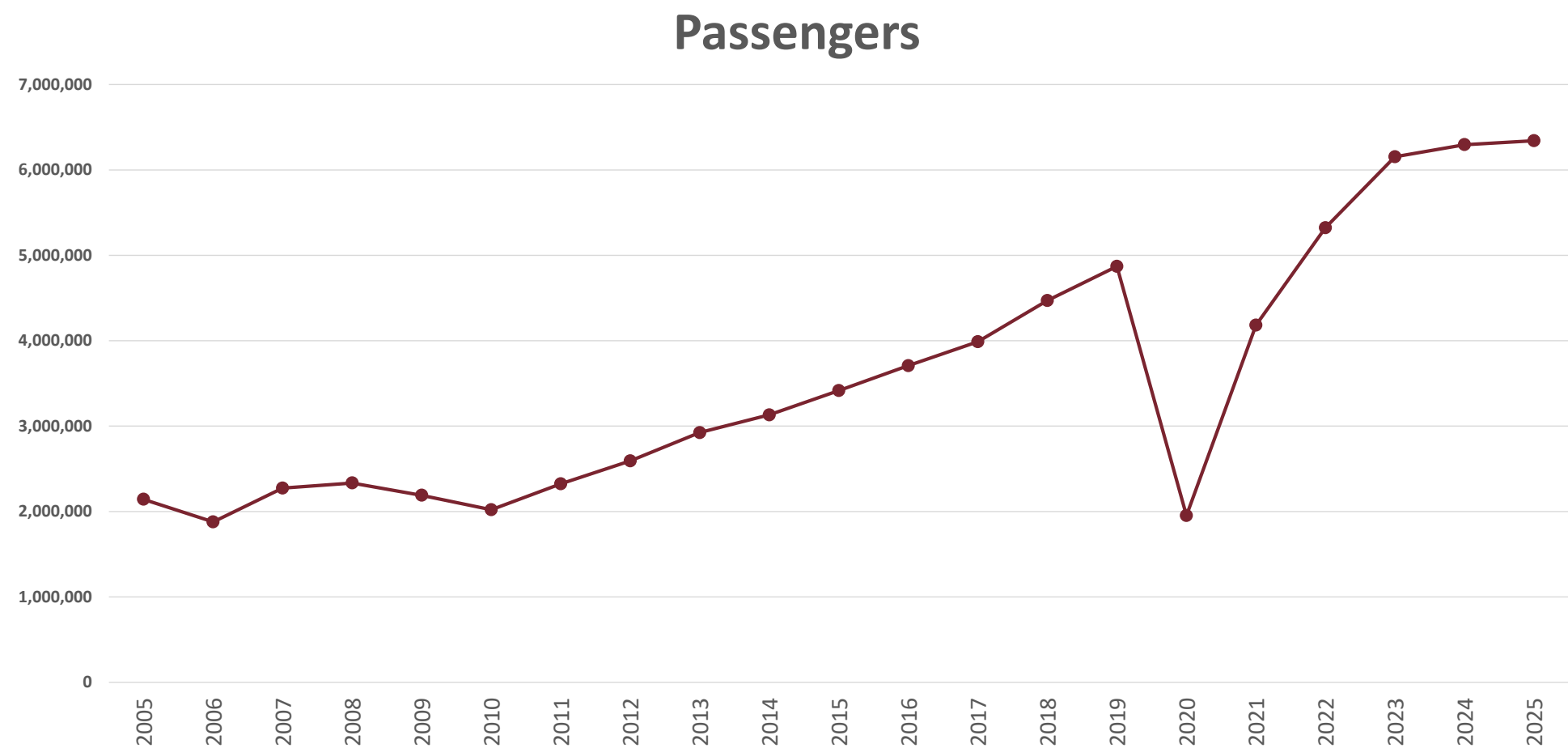
South Carolina Outlook: A Charleston Metro Perspective

Port Traffic



Headwinds: Tariffs, Fuel Costs, Wars

Airport Traffic Continues to Grow



Retail Sales

Retail Sales MSA (1000s)		
Year		Percent Change
2016	\$37,351,727	
2017	\$27,691,780	-25.9%
2018	\$30,398,768	9.8%
2019	\$30,638,738	0.8%
2020	\$27,271,842	-11.0%
2021	\$34,080,485	25.0%
2022	\$37,603,017	10.3%
2023	\$36,790,295	-2.2%
2024	\$38,056,293	3.4%
2025	\$39,754,166	4.5%
2026	\$41,344,332	4.0%

Accommodations

Year	Occupancy	ADR	Percent Change
2021	65.1%	\$166.33	
2022	69.8%	\$181.28	13.4%
2023	70.1%	\$186.11	1.7%
2024	70.2%	\$186.18	0.5%
2025	70.1%	\$187.30	3.3%
2026	71.1%	\$190.76	4.7%

Labor Force & Employment

Year	Labor Force		Employment		Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
		Percent Change		Percent Change		
2016	367,643		352,304		15,339	4.2%
2017	371,305	1.0%	358,130	1.7%	13,176	3.5%
2018	378,036	1.8%	367,442	2.6%	10,594	2.8%
2019	389,107	2.9%	380,136	3.5%	8,971	2.3%
2020	389,615	0.1%	366,932	-3.5%	22,684	5.8%
2021	398,427	2.3%	384,378	4.8%	14,049	3.5%
2022	413,325	3.7%	401,723	4.5%	11,602	2.8%
2023	434,455	5.1%	423,481	5.4%	10,974	2.5%
2024	449,905	3.6%	434,248	2.5%	15,657	3.5%
2025	461,176	2.5%	443,841	2.2%	17,335	3.8%